# GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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DUGONGS, OR SEA COWS, FOUND ON AUSTRALIA'S NORTH COAST

(See Bulletin No. 1)

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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## The First Railroad Through the Heart of Australia Pushes North

TWENTY-THREE miles of railroad have been laid from Oodnadatta toward Alice Springs, in Australia, carrying forward one of the most ambitious railway projects now under way in the world, by which Australia plans to construct the first north and south line through the heart of the continent.

The completed line will connect the city of Adelaide, in a latitude comparable to that of Little Rock or Memphis, with Darwin, Australia's tropical port, which is as close to the Equator as central Nicaragua or the northern tip of South America. In all, this north-south line through the continent will be nearly 2,000 miles long. Six hundred and eighty-eight miles of track already exist in the south, extending from Adelaide to Oodnadatta; and in the north a line extends southward from Darwin for about 300 miles. The project now embarked upon will close the gap of about a thousand miles through some of the least known territory in Australia.

### Railroad Passes Through Country Unknown to Australians

Except for the 125 miles of track from Oodnadatta to the northern border of the State of South Australia, the new construction will be wholly in the Northern Territory, not yet organized as a state. To most Australians this is an unknown land. It bears very much the relation to the developed coastal regions of Australia that the "Great American Desert" bore to the seaboard strips of the United States seventy-five years ago. From the Pacific or eastern coast of Australia, the railways have struck farthest inland, but even there the railheads are hundreds of miles short of the Northern Territory.

In the first zone inland from the coast, agriculture is practiced. Next come the downs or prairies with their great sheep ranches, or "stations," as they are called. This region is reasonably well watered or else lies in the artesian belt. Inland beyond the sheep country the rainfall becomes less and the vegetation sparser, and there the cattle country begins. It is for the grazing of cattle that the Northern Territory has found almost its only use thus far. The stations are scattered over great areas, chiefly in the north and northeast, on what is known as the Barklay Tableland. Some of these ranches are tremendous in extent, one having nearly 10,000 square miles. As in the American West in early days, the properties are not fenced and cattle are marked by brands.

### The Unfenced American West Reproduced in the Antipodes

The rainfall over most of the northern portion of Northern Territory is about 10 inches per year, insufficient to keep streams running. There is a good growth of grass in this region, but water must be guarded in the few water holes or pumped into earthen tanks from wells. The cattle from much of the Barklay Tableland are driven over cattle trails to the railheads in western Queensland. The cattle "pads" or single-file paths are the only roads through much of the region. Along a number of them the government has sunk wells and built windmills.

Although Northern Territory is little known and although its human population is very sparse, across it is carried on much of the telegraphic communication between Australia and England. The overland telegraph line was put

© Photograph by C. P. Scott

**CAMEL TRAINS NOW OPERATE NORTH OF ADELAIDE WHERE RAILROAD TRAINS WILL SOON RUN**

Camel caravans have been used for centuries in arid regions to transport goods. Camel freight is very expensive compared with railroad freight. Over the route on which Australia is now building a railroad, freight by camel has cost $350 a ton. The camel is not a native of Australia but was imported to help conquer the central Australian desert (see Bulletin No. 1).

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## Three Famous Frenchmen and the Flood

RECENT floods have been especially serious in southwest France. There, if the heroes of France could speak for their native heaths, three famous Frenchmen could report the flood.

Assignments would be a simple matter: Montaigne to write "Of Floods," for he is the father of the modern essay; Cyrano de Bergerac, "Will Gascons Rush to Rescue of Flood Victims?" for Cyrano of the long nose is the historic champion of the Gascon hot-heads; and Elisée Reclus, "The Geographic Reasons for Floods in the Valleys of the Dordogne and the Garonne," because Reclus is the author of the first extensive encyclopedia of geography. Birthplaces of Montaigne and Reclus are near the town of Bergerac.

### The Birthplace of the Modern Essay

Cyrano has been introduced to the United States in the play and motion picture made from Edmond Rostand's heroic comedy "Cyrano de Bergerac." His character, as well as the character of the stormy Gascons of Perigord, is indelibly established by the song which Rostand gives them:

"The Cadets of Gascoyne—the defenders
Of Carbon de Casteljaloux:
Free Fighters, free lovers, free spenders—
The Cadets of Gascoyne—the defenders
Of old homes, old names and old splendors—
A proud and pestilent crew!"

An old home, old name and old splendor of Gascony preserved for contemporary appreciation is that of Montaigne. His family built a fortune in the herring business at Bordeaux and moved up in the world by purchasing the Chateau Montaigne, 30 miles from Bordeaux. Here was born Michel Eyquem de Montaigne in 1533. Excepting the period when he was mayor of Bordeaux, the chateau was his residence. The visitor may see the round tower with mottoes carved at Montaigne's direction on walls and rafters. In this retreat Montaigne wrote his volumes of essays, and, since he is the "father of the modern essay," the tower is its birthplace.

### A Man Cannot Be Happy without a "Den," Montaigne Thought

"When at home, I a little more frequent my library," writes Montaigne, "whence I overlook at once all the concerns of my family. 'Tis situated at the entrance into my house, and I thence see under me my garden, court and base-court, and almost all parts of the building. 'Tis in the third storey of a tower, of which the ground room is my chapel, the second storey a chamber with a withdrawing-room and closet, where I often lie, to be more retired; and above is a great wardrobe. This formerly was the most useless part of the house. I there pass away both most of the days of my life and most of the hours of those days.

"'Tis there that I am in my kingdom, and there I endeavour to make myself an absolute monarch, and to sequester this one corner from all society, conjugal, filial, and civil; elsewhere I have but verbal authority only and of a confused

through in 1872 from Adelaide to Darwin, over approximately the line of the railway now under construction. From Darwin a cable reaches Singapore and thence passes westward to Europe.

The extreme southern part of the Northern Territory to be traversed by the new railway is of no agricultural value and of little account for grazing. Much of this region is covered with small stones. Two hundred miles farther the route enters the Macdonnell Highlands where some of the rainfall is retained in rocky gorges. This region may prove of value to the mining industry. Even now in one mine a bed of mica six feet thick is worked. Gold is also known.

### Camel Caravans Operate on Route Tracks Follow

North of the Macdonnell Highlands the grass and scrub country begins. There thousands of cattle graze. A hundred miles south of Darwin the edge of the tableland is reached. The low coastal strip of the Territory is truly tropical. The rainfall amounts to 100 inches and more. Grass is rank, all tropical trees will grow, and cultivation of cotton, sugar and rubber is possible.

When the new railway goes into operation it will displace a highly picturesque but costly transportation system. Now many of the isolated "stations" are dependent for all supplies other than meat on camel caravans operated by Afghan drivers. They plod northward from Oodnadatta along the overland telegraph line as far as 900 miles. Moving freight on camel back for such distances costs about $350 a ton.

© *Photograph by William Jackson*

**CORAL REEF OFF THE NORTH COAST OF AUSTRALIA**

**Consider the difficulty of sailors trying to reach the shore line in the distance. Off-shore reefs have been a hindrance to the development of many parts of Australia. On the northeast coast the Great Barrier Reef stretches for hundreds of miles, creating a serious hazard to sea trade.**

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## Changes in the Geography of Bread

WHEAT is called the staff of life. From the reports coming out of Russia wheat is also the staff of government in the domain of the Soviet.

One of the major changes in the geography of wheat and flour since the World War has been the decline of Russian wheat as a factor in world trade. Russian wheat continues to be a major political factor in Russia itself because of the central government's purchases of the peasant's wheat to feed the cities.

The average yearly world production of wheat during the five years immediately preceding the World War was roughly three and a half billion bushels. In recent years the average has been close to four billion bushels. The wheat supply, therefore, has advanced along with the number of mouths to eat it. So has that part of the wheat crop that is transported from country to country increased. Approximately 800 million bushels (nearly 23 per cent of the production) of wheat and flour entered international trade channels in pre-war days, and about 850 million bushels (22.4 per cent) enter now.

Although the World War had no lasting effect on wheat production and its steady growth, it played havoc with the world trade in wheat. This flow of wheat from the less developed countries to the countries with great urban centers has been an important factor in world economics since the rise of cities. Doubtless Babylon drew grain from countries it ruled. When Rome came to be a great power a veritable river of grain flowed to it from northern Africa, Spain, and the Near East.

### Machinery Started the Tide of Grain Flowing Again

During the Middle Ages commerce in food staples lagged, each country, for the most part, producing its own food. But with the planting of colonies and the coming of the machine age, the tide of grain began to run again, setting toward England and western Europe from Russia, the Western Hemisphere, and finally from Australia.

Russia was the big factor in the wheat trade before the War. She produced more than one-sixth of the entire world crop and exported a fifth of the total international shipments. After a big drop, Russia has almost reached her former position in the matter of production. But apparently the Russians of to-day are better fed; only 3 per cent of the world's wheat exports now come from that country.

Canada has become the chief factor in the international wheat trade. She produced less than 200 million bushels before the War and shipped only 11 per cent of world shipments. In 1926 she grew more than 400 million bushels, and her exports far surpassed the greatest shipments of Russia, reaching 37 per cent of total international exports.

But although Russia and Canada have stood out as the greatest shippers of wheat, in the matter of production the United States surpasses them. This country, in 1926, produced 832 million bushels, more than a fifth of the world total. Only European Russia came anywhere near this mark, with 590 million bushels. Even when Asiatic Russia's 200 million bushels are added, the United States is still in the lead by more than 40 million bushels.

But Uncle Sam's 120,000,000 mouths consume most of this vast volume of

essence. That man, in my opinion, is very miserable, who has not at home where to be by himself, where to entertain himself alone, or to conceal himself from others."

Three products are the pride of this region; wine, truffles, and Perigord Pies. Down in the roots of the oak grow truffles, a queer and strange food, yet highly esteemed by Parisian chefs and their patrons. Perfigord Pie, the third product, is a paté de foie gras produced from the livers of overstout geese.

Ste. Foy la Grande, where Reclus was born in 1830, lies ten miles west of Bergerac. Reclus' great work, "The Earth and Its Inhabitants," required five volumes with many books in each volume. No part of the earth then known was too small to be included in the work. Dispassionate, scientific calm is preserved throughout the hundreds of pages. Even Reclus' home town gets what it deserves; no more and no less. His lines on his birthplace reach a high point in artistic restraint. On page 73, Volume II on France occur these lines: "The most important of these towns is Libourne (12,872 inhabitants) very favorably situated at the mouth of the Isle; others are Ste. Foy la Grande (3,916 inhabitants) and Castillon."

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**SOUTHERN FRANCE HAS IN CARCASSONNE A MARVELOUSLY PRESERVED WALLED TOWN**

**The ghostly pageant of long-maned barbarians, of Frankish battle-axes and Moorish banners, of mailed Crusaders, English yeomen, and French kings, has come and gone, leaving behind a fantastic, romantic jumble of ramparts, towers, bastions, battlements, and barbicans which bring home a sharp sense of the City's complete dissociation from the present. This view from the Round Tower of the Bishop shows details of feudal architecture.**

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## The Promise Labrador Holds

LABRADOR would seem to be a transatlantic bird exchange, according to two recent reports.

First came the notice that a tern tagged in Labrador had been caught in France. Then Donald B. MacMillan radioed from his expedition's winter headquarters at Nain that two lapwing plovers had been taken. The lapwing plover is a European bird, and this is the first time it has been recorded in North America, it is said, for twenty-two years.

Labrador probably will attract increasing public interest, not so much for its bird life as for its vast timber resources, which will provide pulp for a paper hungry world.

The entire region at present has only about 3,600 population. This figure is 500 less than the estimated population forty years ago. North of the settlement of Hopedale, halfway up the coast from Newfoundland, the country is peopled mainly by Eskimos, many of whom have been Christianized. They live in neat wooden houses, supporting themselves by catching seals and fishing for cod. Scattered through the interior live Indians and half-breeds who hunt the fox, marten, bear, wolverine, and other fur-bearing animals which haunt evergreen woods stretching as far north as the Arctic boundary of forestation.

### Timber and Power to Grind It into Pulp

This fir belt covers large areas of the interior of Labrador in all but the extreme northern part, but only touches the rocky coast at the heads of long, narrow bays and the mouths of rivers. As a future source of paper pulp this hitherto little regarded region is of immense value, and already a few mills have been established and concessions granted. Pulp forests form one of the potential sources of wealth. Another asset is unlimited water power of the numerous coastal rivers.

White settlements are mainly on the southeastern coast of Labrador. Here a sparse but sturdy population of Scotch and Scandinavian extraction, together with a few French Canadians, carry on cod and whale fisheries. The number of white inhabitants is quadrupled during the summer months by Newfoundlanders who come north for cod fishing, the principal industry.

Of late years the whale, seal, and cod have been less numerous in Labrador waters. This is thought to be one reason for the steadily diminishing population of the coast. Another factor is that contact with diseases of civilization has proved fatal to whole communities of Eskimos and Indians. Missionaries are making heroic efforts to save the remainder of the native races from extinction by teaching them to adapt their mode of living to changed conditions, and these good offices have met with considerable success.

### Labrador May Be a Summer Rendezvous for Yachtsmen

One effort to compensate for the diminishing number of sea animals has been the introduction into Labrador of the reindeer, which has for centuries been the main support of the Lapps of northern Scandinavia. The reindeer has been successfully raised in Alaska, also. The attempt in Labrador is said to have been successful and promises one solution of the food problem if the devel-

wheat. Some years the exports jump to a quarter of a billion bushels. Usually, however, exports are little more than 100 million bushels, making up the 12 per cent of world shipments that was the rule even in pre-war days.

While Russia has dropped out of the world wheat trade since the war, at least temporarily, and Canada has moved to first place, there have been significant shifts in the positions of other wheat-producing countries. Rumania, which contributed one-sixteenth of the world exports, dropped out entirely for some years, and now supplies only one ninety-sixth. Bulgaria has cut her contribution to one-third the former figure; and Hungary's 55 million bushels have shrunk to 20 million. India, too, has been slowly losing ground as an exporter.

Next to Canada, Australia has shown the greatest growth in wheat shipments, raising her pre-war figure of 6 per cent of world shipments to 15 per cent. Argentina has shown a less spectacular growth from 10½ per cent to 12 per cent.

France's crop of 330 million bushels in 1925 was considerably larger than that of Argentina (223 millions) and approximately twice that of Australia. Italy's 240 million bushels was also greater than the Argentine crop, while Germany's 118 million bushels was not far short of the Australian production. All three of these countries found it necessary to add to heavy home production by purchasing from 4 to 9 per cent of the world shipments.

The greatest importer of wheat continues to be Great Britain, which takes about one-quarter of all international wheat shipments.

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**ONE OF THE LEADING COMMUNITIES IN LABRADOR**

**At present the vast domain of Labrador has fewer than 4,000 inhabitants. Dwellers on the rock-bound coast lead a difficult existence. Their lot may be improved when outside capital begins to develop Labrador's timber resources. Inland is a vast stretch of trees suitable for paper pulp (see Bulletin No. 4).**

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## Saigon and Hanoi: Centers of France's Far East Empire

THE CENSUS of France and her colonies recently released for publication revealed that French Indo-China, with 20,000,000 people, has a population half as large as the mother country.

French rule in her Far East domain centers in Saigon, the commercial capital, and Hanoi, the political capital. Indo-China takes the shape of Italy's familiar boot wrapped for a bad case of gout. Continuing the parallel, Hanoi occupies a position in the north like Milan, while Saigon is in a southern location like Messina.

True French boulevards with their sidewalk cafes, pastry shops and displays of Parisian modes; fashionably gowned ladies who drive in the park of an afternoon; Latin accents; and many of the other touches that make Paris what it is, are to be found in Saigon and Hanoi, in French Indo-China, 6,500 miles from the Eiffel Tower as the crow—or a French airman—flies.

### Where France Has Beautified as Well as Modernized

Saigon and Hanoi are unfailing objects of wonder to the few tourists who poke about in the odd corners of the Far East. In them France has accomplished as much as America has with Manila or Great Britain with Hong Kong or Singapore; and in addition to giving them industries, cleaning them and supplying sanitation, public utilities and good rule, the French have greatly beautified them.

Bits of these cities seem veritable parts of Paris set down outside the jungle. Well-shaded and perfectly maintained boulevards cross both cities, and lining them or set in near-by parks are monumental public buildings in the best French architecture. In certain sections of the cities it is difficult to realize that one is not in a progressive European capital, were it not for the 'rikishas that flash by pulled by trotting Annamites.

Railroads serve both Saigon and Hanoi; the monumental "Union Stations," puffing locomotives, and in rural regions, the familiar long steel spans of bridges vaulting broad rivers, take one's thoughts again back to the West.

### Capital Moved From Saigon in 1902

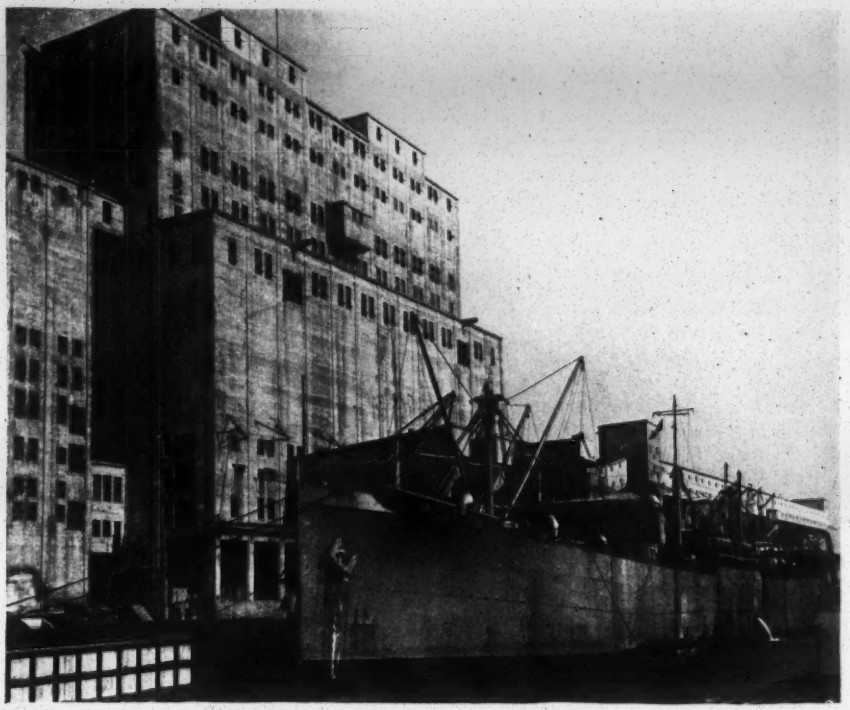
Saigon, which is the capital of Cochin China, France's first Asiatic land, was also for a long time the center of administration for the other provinces and protectorates that make up French Indo-China. But in 1902 that distinction was taken from Saigon and conferred upon Hanoi, which has since grown steadily in importance. Saigon proper has a population of about 108,000, but its suburbs swell the total to near 240,000.

Hanoi has ample possibilities for beautification, and the French have made the most of them. In addition to the Red River which serves as a transportation artery, the city and its environs are dotted with a number of lakes ranging from Le Petit Lac, covering about 300 acres, to Le Grand Lac, many times its size. Some of the most charming parks and drives of the city are on the banks of these lakes. The population of the city is more than 115,000.

opment of pulp and milling industries extends. Another advantage is that work in mills already established has helped lift the natives from entire dependence on fishing and hunting which do not promise a sure and regular income.

Wireless stations have brought larger settlements into closer contact with the outside world. It is predicted that when this means of communication has been extended and coasts are better charted and lighthouses built that Labrador with its rocky inlets and bracing climate will become, like Norway, a rendezvous for summer yachtsmen. During the short northern summer Labrador is pictured as a land of supreme beauty. Rocky headlands run far into the sea. Deep fiords cut the fir-covered hills of the interior. Sub-Arctic vegetation flourishes, and salmon streams invite the fisherman.

**Bulletin No. 4, March 12, 1928.**



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**LOADING A VESSEL WITH GRAIN: BALTIMORE**

**In ten hours this plant can receive 400 cars of grain, deliver 1,800,000 bushels to five ships, clean 600,000 bushels, and dry 40,000—all under the direction of one man, the "grain dispatcher." The elevator has a storage capacity of about 5,000,000 bushels of grain. The work is so simplified in this huge elevator that the grain can be taken from the cars to the scales, thence to the vessel, without going to the bins; or the loading can be done from the bins. The grain is carried on immense belt conveyors (see Bulletin No. 3).**

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## FRENCH INDO-CHINA AND EASTERN SIAM

**Close to the city of Saigon appears the town of Cholon, which is really a suburb. Cholon was founded by Chinese immigrants and now outnumbers its parent city, Saigon. Monumental ruins of a great civilization now dead exist at Angkor, on a tributary of the Mekong, close to the Siamese border.**